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1892

CHARLES KINGSLEY,

NOVELIST.

STANFORD
LIBRARIES

A Lecture

DELIVERED AT CHESTER, ON APRIL 4, 1892,

BY

J. A. R. MARRIOTT, M.A.,

NEW COLLEGE AND WORCESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD;
LECTURER IN MODERN HISTORY AND POLITICAL ECONOMY;
OXFORD UNIVERSITY EXTENSION STAFF-LECTURER IN HISTORY AND LITERATURE.

WITH A PREFATORY NOTE BY

HIS HONOUR JUDGE HUGHES, Q.C.

Oxford:
B. H. BLACKWELL, 50 & 51, BROAD STREET.
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PREFATORY NOTE.

WHILE listening to Mr. Marriott's lecture on Charles Kingsley in the crowded Town Hall of Chester more than one scene of forty years ago came back to me very vividly. One of these was the denunciation from the reading-desk of his sermon on "The Message of the Church to the Labouring Man," by the incumbent of the London church in which he had been invited to preach it; another, a crowded exhibition some weeks later, in the summer of 1851, when I saw several persons deliberately pass him without the least token of recognition, though they had known him quite well. That summer of the "Great Exhibition Year" was the high-water mark of the outbreak of fanaticism and pedantry, religious and atheistic, against him and "The Master" (as he always called Mr. Maurice) as the "Apostles of Socialism," the "allies of the dangerous fanatics who were turning the Continent upside down." The ebb, however, only really set in a year later, when "The Master" was dismissed from his Professorship at King's College, under circumstances which drew the attention of all England to the controversy, and so brought out an overwhelming expression of admiration and confidence from every sound section of English society.

Kingsley's appointment as Tutor to the Prince of Wales may be taken as the high-water mark in the reaction, when he became a Court favourite, a lion in the fashionable world, whenever he could be induced to appear in it, and a welcome and honoured guest in whatever society he chose to frequent. There have been many such changes in public opinion. I can myself remember several almost as complete, but none I think so rapid, or so unreasoning. Now many—though perhaps not most—men of his calibre would not have been much affected one way or another by caprice of this kind. Such men know the *vox populi* to be "fickle, false, and vain," and can entrench themselves in the old Scotch fortress, "They say: What say they? Let them say," and these wait the issue quietly and confidently.

But Charles Kingsley was not one of this minority. No man was ever more sensitive to public opinion—felt its censure more keenly, or enjoyed its applause more frankly—than he. He has often lamented this sensitiveness to me, and that he "was bred to think first, not whether a thing was right or wrong but, what Lady A or Mr. B would say about it." And yet with all this sensitiveness it would be hard to find any man of our time who was less warped by it—who wavered less in saying or doing the word or thing which he felt it was true and right to say or do, looking the storm, which he knew it would bring about his ears, straight in the face all the time. I am not aware that this has ever been fairly brought out, and it deserves a prominent place in studying and estimating his life's work. I remember as a boy hearing an old Peninsular officer telling a story of a comrade of his who was known as one of the bravest men in his division, and who had volunteered to lead a storming party at St. Sebastian. They were lying in the trenches waiting for the signal gun, and watching the men of the forlorn hope who were joking one another, and playing leap frog in the early dawn. "Look at those fellows," the leader said, "how I envy them! and here am I sitting shivering in a blue funk; and yet I know that I shall be out of this trench and at the foot of the breach before any of them." I often thought of that story when the *Quarterly Review* and the *Reasoner*, the *Record* and *Guardian*, were in full cry after our leaders, and we of the rank and file were rather enjoying all the abuse than otherwise.

Now I don't think anyone can appreciate Charles Kingsley rightly who is not aware of or does not take into account this almost painful sensitiveness, and I am glad to be able to make this addition to Mr. Marriott's excellent lecture, which seems to me in all other respects a thoroughly trustworthy and sympathetic sketch of his life and work in relation to that important part of it which is dealt with.

In my judgment it is not his highest and most precious work, which must be looked for in his writings and practical work as a clergyman of the National Church, in which I include his letters on politics (in the *People* and the *Christian Socialist*) and his addresses to the physical-force Chartists, whom he was accused of inciting, and in fact did more than any other man to restrain. This is not the place to make good my view, but I may here note that but for his position as the parson of a parish—independent of pew rents and popularity, and of any body of elders or trustees, or even of governors in high places, such as the body who dismissed his great

master from his professorship at King's College—he would probably have neither preached or written after 1849, and have merged himself in the second rank of scientific men, for he had not the necessary qualifications for the first rank.

THOS. HUGHES.

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* *

The following lecture was delivered on the invitation of the Chester Committee for the Extension of University Teaching, and to their kindness its publication is due. I wish to take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude for this—as for many other acts of kindness received at their hands. My thanks are also due to His Honour Judge Hughes for kindly writing the foregoing note.

J. A. R. MARRIOTT.

Oxford, April, 1892.

My Lord Bishop, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I assure you that I employ no formal phrase when I say that in responding to the invitation of your Committee to speak to-night on Charles Kingsley, I stand absolutely aghast at my own audacity. I know full well the warm affection and loyal reverence with which Chester cherishes the memory of one of the worthiest of Cheshire worthies. And for a stranger to come here to speak of Kingsley, to criticise, to blame, to praise, must seem to savour somewhat of impertinence. But in extenuation of my fault, I may urge that it is not spontaneous; that I come not on my own motion, but at the instance of those whose behests I may not disregard; that I come to speak of Kingsley in a sphere not local but cosmopolitan, in an aspect in which he belongs not to Chester but to the English-speaking world: of Kingsley, not as preacher, priest, or sciencist, but merely of Kingsley as a novelist. Finally, I may submit that though I know him only in his books, I yield to no man who knew him in the flesh, in admiration for the life, the character, and work of one of the manliest, truest, and most healthy-minded Englishmen that ever lived.

I have said that I shall deal with him simply as a novelist. And yet I am sure you will feel that it is exceedingly difficult to observe the limitation. And, indeed, it is impossible to judge him fairly even in this capacity, without at the same time remembering that besides being a novelist he was also Poet, and Naturalist, Court Preacher, Parish Priest, Sanitary Reformer, and Academical Professor, and that in all these

various spheres, he proved himself to be a man of exceptional power, of exceptional fertility of mind, of exceptional range and versatility of interest.

This versatility, one must at the outset admit, was at once his strength and his weakness, his glory and his snare; the source of his extraordinary influence over men of widely differing tempers and pursuits, and at the same time the source of his most obvious and manifest shortcomings. It contributed, no doubt, to that feverishness and diffuseness, that lack of concentration, that absence of the impression of strength in reserve, so frequently noticed by his critics. To the same dangerous gift, too, is to be attributed the fact that though most of Kingsley's work was of very high merit, yet much of it—some would say all—is undoubtedly just short of the best. He was, for example, the author of some exquisite poems, some of the most pathetic lyrics in the language, but we shall hardly dare to call him a great poet. He was an admirable naturalist, as you in Chester are especially in a position to know, yet he was not a great sciencist. He delivered some excellent lectures on History, but no one claims that he was a great Historian. He was the author of half-a-dozen novels of enduring, and it would seem, increasing popularity; do these works entitle him to a place, will they secure for him a place among the masters of English fiction?

It is the purpose of my lecture to attempt an answer to this question. But before I turn to the novelist one word as to the man. It need I think be only one. For in the first place you knew him better than most people have known him; and in the second place since the publication of Mrs. Kingsley's Memoir we have all in one sense known him well.

By birth a Devonian, he belonged by descent—as it was always his pride to remember and recall—to Cheshire. His father, a scholar, a sportsman, and a parson, had a cure near Dartmoor, and there on June 12, 1819, Charles Kingsley was born. He seems to have been a singularly precocious child, for though all children, I believe, write poetry, and most children write romances (was it not Charlotte Brontë who produced twenty-five volumes before she was fourteen?), few,

I suspect, could produce such lines as the following before they were five years old!—

A SONG UPON LIFE!

Life is, and soon will pass;
As life is gone, death will come.
We—we rise again—
In Heaven we must abide.
Time passes quickly;
He flies on wings as light as silk.
We must die.
It is not false that we must rise again;
Death has its fatal sting,
It brings us to the grave.
Time and death is and must be.

The future novelist seems as a child to have been highly strung, sensitive, and imaginative; peculiarly susceptible, moreover, to the influence of his immediate surroundings. "I firmly believe," he wrote, "in the magnetic effect of the place where one has been bred; and have continually the true 'Heimweh' home-sickness of the Swiss and Highlanders. The thought of the West Country will make me burst into tears at any moment, wherever I am, it always hangs before my imagination as *home*, and I feel myself a stranger and a sojourner in a foreign land the moment I get east of Taunton Dean on the Mendips. It may be fancy, but it is most real and practical as many fancies are." The Fen country, too, to which his father presently removed, had a great fascination for Kingsley. "They have a beauty of their own," he used to say, "those great fens, a beauty as of the sea, of boundless expanse and freedom. Overhead the arch of heaven spreads more ample than elsewhere, and that vastness gives such cloudlands, such sunrises, such sunsets, as can be seen nowhere else within these Isles."

Kingsley was educated mainly at Helston School, under Mr. Derwent Coleridge; afterwards at King's College. But he was too much out of the common to be a popular schoolboy. "Though strong and active, he was not expert at games," wrote one of his fellows, "he knew too much and his mind was generally on a higher level than ours." The same

thing is true of many men who have afterwards become distinguished in imaginative literature, conspicuously so, for example, of William Makepeace Thackeray. There is some consolation here for many a schoolboy failure; but let such be careful lest they make too much of it. For it would be exceedingly false doctrine to teach—and withal exceedingly pernicious—that every schoolboy who fails to win popularity with his fellows is on that account to be regarded as a budding genius, destined in time to take his place beside Thackeray and Kingsley. School days over, Kingsley went up in 1838 to Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he took a distinguished degree—a First in Classics and a Second in Mathematics in 1842. In the same year he was ordained to the Curacy of Eversley, and some two years afterwards, in January, 1844, he married the daughter of Mr. Pascoe Grenfell.

What marriage meant to Kingsley is abundantly shewn in every book he ever wrote. The starting point, the fundamental basis of his whole creed was a chivalrous and tender reverence for women; the central doctrine of all his preaching, the keystone of his social philosophy was an incessant insistence on the purity and sanctity of home life. So much indeed was this the case, that Kingsley might be called without exaggeration "the poet of wedded love," the "novelist of marriage." "He was not slow to proclaim," writes one of his critics, "in all his writings, that of all good things that can befall a man in this world, the best is that he should fall in love with a good woman. . . . . The love of man for woman when sanctified by religious feeling, is, according to him, the greatest of all forces that work for individual or social good."* And with what ineffable grace, with what instinctive truth does Kingsley delineate the character and reveal the redemptive power of a good woman. Thus in "Hypatia," for example, you will recall the influence exerted by Victoria on Raphael Ben Ezra; in "Two Years Ago," Grace Harvey performs the same office for Tom Thurnall; Lillian for Alton Locke, and so on in all his novels. Equally

* Mr. Leslie Stephen: *Hours in a Library*.

to be remarked is his delineation of women happily married like Lady Grenville, or Mrs. Leigh; and most remarkable of all is his portrayal of the life and influence of women less happily circumstanced, like the wife of the drunken Squireen Trebooze, and the wife of the vain and irritable poet, Elsley Vavasour.

To the same profound conviction is to be traced Kingsley's dislike to a celibate priesthood. You will recall, I think, the interview between Tom Thurnall and Frank Headley:

"'Honestly, I will try: God help me' added Frank in a lower voice, 'but as for quarrels between man and wife, as I told you, no one understands them less than I.'

"'Then marry a wife yourself and quarrel a little with her for experiment, and then you'll know all about it.'

"Frank laughed in spite of himself.

"'Thank you. No man is less likely to try that experiment than I.'

"'Hum!'

"'I have quite enough as a bachelor to distract me from my work, without adding to them those of a wife and family, and those little home lessons in the frailty of human nature, in which you advise me to copy Mr. Vavasour.'

"'And so,' said Tom, 'having to doctor human beings, nineteen-twentieths of whom are married; and being aware that three-parts of the miseries of human life come either from wanting to be married or from married cares and troubles, you think that you will improve your chance of doctoring your flock rightly by avoiding carefully the least practical acquaintance with the chief cause of their disease. Philosophical and logical, truly!'

"'You seem to have acquired a little knowledge of men and women, my friend, without encumbering yourself with a wife and children.'

"'Would you like to go to the same school to which I went?' asked Thurnall, with a look of such grave meaning that Frank's pure spirit shuddered within him. 'And I'll tell you this; whenever I see a woman nursing her baby, or a father with his child upon his knees, I say to myself—

they know more, at this minute of human nature, as of the great law of "C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour which makes the world go round," than I am likely to do for many a day. I'll tell you what, sir! These simple natural ties which are common to us and the dumb animals—as I live, sir, they are the divinest things I see in the world! I have but one, and that is love to my poor old father; that's all the religion I have as yet. But I tell you it alone has kept me from being a ruffian and a blackguard. And I'll tell you more,' said Tom, warming, 'of all diabolical dodges for preventing the parsons from seeing who they are, or what human beings are, or what their work in the world is, or anything else, the neatest is that celibacy of the clergy. I should like to have you with me in Spanish America, or in France either, and see what you thought of it then. How it ever came into mortal brains is to me the puzzle. I've often fancied when I've watched those priests—and very good fellows too some of them are—that there must be a devil after all abroad in the world, as you say; for **no human insanity could ever have hit upon so complete and cute a device for making parsons do the more harm,** the more good they try to do. There, I've preached you a sermon, and made you angry.'"

But that Kingsley could see and understand and sympathise with the other side of the picture, the following extract from a letter shows:—

"But if a man says to himself, 'I know marriage is the highest, because the most symbolic of all human states, but it is not for me, I have a great work to do, a peculiar vocation which lies in a quite opposite direction to the duties of citizen and husband, and I must bear that cross. God has refused to let me love woman; and even hereafter if I shall love, I must turn away from the fulfilment of that love in *time*, trusting to my heavenly Father to give us some deeper and more ineffable union with each other in those glories unknown, which He has prepared for those who love Him. At all events the work which He has given me must be done, and as a married man, I cannot do my work,

peculiar as it is.' I believe that he who should so embrace celibacy would deserve all names of honour which men could heap on him."

The year of his marriage was a memorable year to Kingsley in another way; for it was in that same year that he was appointed to the Rectory of Eversley, and took up his residence in the village that remained his home—in the truest sense a home—till death. I am tempted here to say a word about his work at Eversley—his work as a parish priest; but it is a temptation which I must resist. His own idea of what a parish priest should be, you may gather from the extracts I have already read, and indeed, from all his books, especially from "Hypatia," "Yeast," and "Two Years Ago." For "scholar, poet, novelist, he yet felt himself to be," said his friend Dean Stanley, "with all and before all a spiritual teacher and guide."

> "Inheriting the zeal
> And from the sanctity of elder times
> Not deviating; a priest the like of whom
> If multiplied, and in their stations set,
> Would o'er the bosom of a joyful land
> Spread true religion and her genuine fruits."

In the Memoirs too you may read the oft-quoted testimony of Mr. Harrison:—

"He knew his people intimately: their proper callings, tastes, failings, and virtues. He was interested as a matter of fact, and not from the mere desire to please, in the occupations of everyone, and had the right word for each and all. Men at once felt at ease with him, because there was such unmistakeable ring of sincerity, such evident understanding of their wants, and such real acquaintance and sympathy with what they were thinking and doing in all that he said. The poor could tell him freely what they felt and what they wanted, seeing at once that he knew more about them than men of his social standing generally knew. . . . . But there was, when I knew him, a lofty courtesy and abiding seriousness about him in his very look and appearance, and in all he said and did, which marked him out from other men

and secured to him at all times the respectful attention and reverence alike of friends and strangers. 'I am nothing,' he once said to me, 'if not a priest.'"

But I must not multiply testimony of this kind. Enough to say here that Kingsley nobly fulfilled the ideal prediction of the poet:—

> My heart and hope is with thee—thou wilt be
> A latter Luther, and a soldier priest
> To scare Church harpies from the monster's feet,
> Our dusty velvets have much need of thee:
> Thou art no Sabbath drawer of old saws,
> Distilled from some worm-cankered homily,
> But spurred at heart with fieriest energy
> To embattail and to war about thy cause,
> With iron-worded proof hating to hark
> The drumming of the drowsy pulpit drone,
> Half God's good Sabbath, while the worn-out clerk
> Brow-beats his desk below."

It was shortly after his appointment to Eversley that Kingsley entered on his literary career. That career was singularly brief, for all his best work was done between 1848 and 1857. To that period belong not merely the *Saint's Tragedy*, which was published in 1848, but also, if we except *Hereward the Wake*, all his novels. These novels correspond to the three great interests of Kingsley's life. First: the political and social interest. This gave us the Chartist novels, *Yeast* and *Alton Locke*. Secondly: the scientific or sanitary interest, which was mainly responsible for *Two Years Ago*. Thirdly: the historical and philosophical, to which we must attribute *Westward Ho!* and *Hypatia*.

Let me in the first place direct your attention to the Chartist novels—the two works which were produced by—and which will permanently illustrate that strange crisis in our history, in part political, in part social, in part economical,—the crisis known as "Chartism." But first, we must ask, what was "Chartism"? It is essential to understand it, or we can never understand, still less appreciate, the attitude of Kingsley in regard to it. Well, "Chartism" seems to have represented a mass of accumulated discontent, evoked in

part by the results of the great Industrial Revolution through which England had passed during the last quarter of the 18th and the first quarter of the 19th century; evoked in part by the results of the Reform Act of 1832. The whole of the benefits arising both from the one and from the other, both from economical revolution and from political reform, seemed to have been monopolised by the middle classes, by the great capitalists who had come into being during the last half century. A wonderful series of mechanical inventions, beginning with the invention of the fly shuttle by Kay in 1738, and culminating in the application of steam to manufacture about 1790, had produced a wholly unforeseen and unprecedented increase in the aggregate wealth of the country. But that wealth seemed to the working classes to be distributed most unfairly. While foreign trade was advancing by leaps and bounds, while factories were rearing their ungainly chimneys in the cities, while splendid villas were rising in the suburbs to testify to the increasing wealth of the capitalist, the artizan complained that trade was shifty, that employment was inconstant, that wages were stationary or falling, and that food was getting dearer day by day. There was wealth in abundance, wealth created as they thought mainly by themselves, and yet many of them were starving. They could not understand it; small blame to them, they were bewildered and perplexed. And after all, was it not bewildering and perplexing? The problem seemed inscrutable. "In the midst of plethoric plenty," as Carlyle has put it in one of his illuminating phrases, "the people perish."

But this was not all. The Reform Act of 1832, so eagerly anticipated by the working classes seemed for the moment positively detrimental to their interests. Whatever of real antagonism there was, lay between the artizan and the mill-owner, the employed and the employer, the labourer and the capitalist. But the Reform Act had dethroned the territorialist only to crown that same capitalist in his place. The working men were bitterly disappointed in the issue. Hence, when the Anti-Corn-Law movement was inaugurated by men like Cobden and Bright, it was vigorously denounced

by the Chartist leaders as a middle-class manœuvre. "If you give up your agitation for the Charter to help the Free Traders," said Thomas Cooper, "they will not help you to get the Charter. Don't be deceived by the middle classes again. You helped them to get their votes, but where are the fine promises they made to you? Gone to the winds. And now they want to get the Corn Laws repealed, not for your benefit, but for their own. Cheap bread, they cry, but they mean low wages. Do not listen to their cant and humbug. Stick to your Charter. You are veritable slaves without your votes."

We now know that Thomas Cooper was, at any rate in part, mistaken. But mistaken or not, it was political reform, manhood suffrage, the ballot, annual parliaments, and the like, upon which the Chartists insisted.

"Yes, I too," says Alton Locke, "I too, like Crossthwaite, took the upper classes at their word, bowed down to the idol of political institutions, and pinned my hopes of salvation on the possession of 'one ten-thousandth part of a talker in the national palaver.' True I desired the Charter as a means to glorious ends, but soon, with me, and I am afraid with many, the means became by the frailty of poor human nature, an end, an idol, in itself. . . I had so made up my mind that it was the only method of getting what I wanted, that I neglected, alas, but too often to try the methods which lay already by me. 'If we had but the Charter,' was the excuse for a thousand lazinesses, procrastinations. 'If we had but the Charter,' I should be good, and free and happy. Fool that I was, it was within, rather than without, that I needed reform. . . . For my part I seem to have learnt that the only thing to regenerate the world is not more of any system good or bad, but simply more of the spirit of God. About the supposed omnipotence of the Charter I have found out my mistake. I believe no more in 'Morrison's pill remedies,' as Thomas Carlyle calls them. Talismans are worthless. The age of spirit-compelling spells, whether of parchment or of carbuncle, is past, if, indeed, it ever existed."

But Chartism had still another, and in one sense more important, side. I doubt very much whether either economical or political causes would have been sufficient by themselves to have produced the upheaval without the *social estrangement*, the ever widening gulph between class and class which was by far the most serious feature of the time. When Disraeli could write of "Two nations between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy, who are as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts and feelings as if they were dwellers in different zones or inhabitants of different planets; who are formed by a different breeding, are fed by a different food, are ordered by different manners and are not governed by the same laws": when Disraeli, I say, could write in terms such as these, it was obvious that matters had come to a formidable pass. And they had. The old social order had gone, and as yet no new order had been evolved out of the chaos. "The slowly dissolving framework of mediæval industrial life was suddenly broken in pieces by the mighty blows of the steam-engine and the power-loom. With it disappeared like a dream those ancient habits of social union and personal affection which had lingered on in the quiet homesteads where master and apprentice worked side by side at the loom and in the forge. Industry was dragged from cottages into factories and cities; the operative who laboured in the mill was parted from the capitalist who owned it; and the struggle for the wealth which machinery promised withered the old bonds of mutual trust and made competition seem a new and terrible force." In these few graphic words Arnold Toynbee paints the leading features of the change and the main source of the problem by which England was confronted. Up till the middle of the 18th century England had been—as no other European nation was—in a very real sense a *Community*. Man and man, class and class, had been bound together by real ties and in many cases by genuine affection and respect. The events of the last half century had, most unhappily, shattered the ties, dissolved the community, and England had become a mere aggregation of discontented, disorganized, antagonistic atoms!

It was then, there, and therefore, that Kingsley struck in. The situation was one eminently calculated to appeal to his strong sense of chivalry, to evoke his sterling patriotism, his well grounded confidence in England and in Englishmen. With revolution in a destructive sense he had no sympathy at all. He had no belief in a merely mechanical equality. "He believed," says Mr. Stephen truly, "in the social as much as in the ecclesiastical hierarchy." At the same time he felt, and felt strongly, first: that the crisis was real and important. And it was. Less important, perhaps, than Kingsley himself supposed it, but far more important than some of his contemporaries were willing to allow. "So vividly," writes one of his friends, "did he realize the sufferings of the poor, so keenly did he feel what he deemed the callousness and incompetence of the Government and the mass of the upper classes to alleviate them, that at times he seemed to look with trembling for the coming of great and terrible social convulsions, of a day of the Lord, such as Isaiah looked for as the inevitable fate of a world grown evil yet governed still by a righteous God. In later years this feeling gradually left him, but it was no mere pulpit or poetic gust." Secondly: Kingsley felt that the Chartists were generally misunderstood or misrepresented, and he wanted, at any rate, to show them that there were men of position and education who did understand, who did feel for and with them. "Workmen of England (in his first placard) you say that you are wronged. Many of you are wronged; and many besides yourselves know it." At the same time, Kingsley was in no sense at all a mere demagogue. He was far too true a friend of the people to be a mere servile adulator. Only he who can obey, he told them, is fit to rule. "A nobler day is dawning for England—a day of freedom, science, industry, but there will be no true freedom without virtue, no true science without religion, no true industry without the fear of God and love to your fellow citizens."

His brave and noble words remind one of those other noble words addressed by Mazzini to his fellow countrymen in his Preface to the "Duties of Man":—

"If you would emancipate yourselves from the arbitrary rule and tyranny of man, you must begin by rightly adoring God . . . I love you too well either to flatter your passions or to caress the golden dreams by which others seek to win your favour. My voice may sound too harsh and I may too severely insist on proclaiming the necessity of virtue and sacrifice; but I know, and you too, untainted by false doctrine and unspoiled by wealth, will soon know also, that the sole origin of every right is in a duty fulfilled."

Such then was the attitude of Kingsley, and such was the state of things which produced his first two novels—"Yeast" published in 1848, and "Alton Locke" in 1850. These two novels represent the two sides of the problem by which England was confronted—the Agrarian and the Urban. For if there was rioting in the cities, there was rick-burning in the country, and while "Alton Locke" introduces us to the sweaters' dens belonging to the London tailors, "Yeast" makes us to understand, and how vividly! the less aggressive but not less deep-seated, the less articulate but still more sullen discontent of the country districts.

To criticize either of these works by ordinary canons is exceedingly difficult, for they were written, as Mrs. Kingsley tells us, with her husband's "heart's blood." To pick holes in them is easy enough. The youngest and most confident critic can pronounce the work to be feverish, hasty, crude; he can assert without fear of contradiction, that the characterization is lacking in variety, and that the artistic excellence of the work is spoilt by what a French critic has called "the regular presence of a moral intention." All this we may cheerfully admit without conceding anything which Kingsley himself would have cared to maintain. For Kingsley's aim in writing "Yeast" or "Alton Locke" was not to produce an artistic romance, but to make the upper classes of society understand (as Carlyle hath it) "what it is that the under classes intrinsically mean," to interpret clearly to those in authority and power "the thought which at heart torments these wild inarticulate souls, struggling there with inarticulate uproar like dumb creatures in pain,

unable to speak what is in them." This was Kingsley's ambition—to remove the *misunderstanding* which as Carlyle insisted, and rightly insisted, was at the bottom of the mischief. He selected prose fiction—wisely or unwisely—as I think very wisely, as the vehicle nearest to his hand and most convenient for the purpose he had essentially in view.

And yet, when all deductions have been made, surely "Yeast" and "Alton Locke," judged by the severest standards, cannot be lightly cast aside. Lancelot and Tregarva were not mere wooden blocks, but living flesh and blood, typical in their restlessness and heart-searchings of many young men not of that day only but of this. In the other characters of "Yeast"; in the Squire and Mrs. Lavington, in Argemone and Honoria, and the rest, Kingsley himself confessed a very languid interest. "I shall be blamed," he writes, "for having left untold the fate of those characters who have acted throughout as Lancelot's satellites. But indeed, their only purpose consisted in their influence on his development and that of Tregarva." And yet, despite Kingsley's own words, I must plead to be allowed to rescue from the general oblivion one character: old Harry Verney, the ill-fated keeper:—

"He found on the Weir bridge two of the keepers. The younger one, Tregarva, was a stately, thoughtful looking Cornishman, some six feet three in height, with thews and sinews in proportion. He was sitting on a bridge looking over a basket of eel-lines and listening silently to the chat of his companion. Old Harry Verney, the other keeper, was a character in his way, and a very bad character too, though he was a patriarch among all the game-keepers of the vale. He was a short, wiry, bandy-legged, ferret-visaged old man, with grizzled hair and a wizened face, tanned brown and purple by constant exposure. Between rheumatism and constant handling the rod and gun, his fingers were crooked like a hawk's claws. He kept his left eye always shut, apparently to save trouble in shooting, and squinted and sniffed and peered with a stooping back and protruded chin, as if he

were perpetually on the watch for fish, flesh and fowl, vermin and Christian. The friendship between himself and the Scotch terrier at his heels would have been easily explained by Lessing, for in the transmigration of souls the spirit of Harry Verney had evidently once animated a dog of that breed. He was dressed in a huge, thick, fustian jacket, scratched, stained and patched, with bulging, greasy pockets; a caste of flies round a battered hat, riddled with shot holes, a dog thistle at his button-hole, and an old gun cut short over his arm, bespoke his business."

The death of the same old keeper forms one of the most pathetic scenes in the whole of Kingsley's writings:—

"A sharp crack followed, a bright flash in the darkness, every white birch stem and jaded oak-leaf shone out for a moment as bright as day, and in front of the glare Lancelot saw the old man throw his arms wildly upward, fall forward, and disappear on the dark ground.

"'You've done it! Off with you!' and the rascals rushed off up the ride.

"In a moment Tregarva was by the old man's side and lifted him tenderly up.

"'They've done for me, Paul. Old Harry's got his gruel, he's heard his last shot fired. I knowed it 'ud come to this, and I said it. Ay! didn't I now, Paul?' And as the old man spoke, the working of his lungs pumped great drops of blood out over the still heather flowers as they slept in the moonshine, and dabbled them with smoking gore. . .

"They sent right and left for the Doctor and the Vicar: the Squire was in a frenzy of rage and grief.

"'Don't take on, master, don't take on,' said old Harry, as he lay, while the Colonel and Honoria in vain endeavoured to staunch the wound, 'I knowed it would be sooner or later: 'tis all in the way of business, they haven't carried off a bird, squire. We was too many for them, eh! Paul? eh! Paul?'

"'Where is that cursed Doctor,' said the Squire. 'Save him Colonel, save him and I'll give you——'

"Alas! the charge of shot at a few feet distance had entered

like a bullet, tearing a great ragged hole. There was no hope, and the Colonel knew it, but he said nothing. . .

"The Vicar entered, but he was too late, the old man's strength was failing and his mind began to wander.

"'Windy, windy,' he murmured to himself, 'windy, dark and windy, birds won't lie, not old Harry's fault, how black it grows, we must be home by night-fall — where's that young dog gone, arter the larks—the brute.'

"Old Squire Lavington sobbed like a child.

"'You will soon be home my man,' said the Vicar, 'remember that you have a Saviour in Heaven, cast yourself on His mercy.'

"Harry shook his head.

"'Very good words, very kind, very heavy game bag, though. Never get home, never any more at all. Where's my boy Tom, to carry it. Send for my boy Tom. He was always a good boy, till he got along with them poachers.'

* * * * *

"'Listen,' he said, 'listen! There's bells a-ringing—ringing in my head. Come you here, Paul Tregarva.' He pulled Tregarva's face down to his own and whispered—

"'Them's the bells a-ringing for Miss Honor's wedding.' Paul started, and drew back. Harry chuckled and grinned for a moment in his old foxy peering way, and then wandered off again.

"'What's that thumping and roaring?' Alas! It was the failing pulsation of his own heart. 'It's the weir, the weir, the weir,— a washing me away — thundering over me. Squire, I'm drowning,—drowning and choking! Oh, Lord, how deep! Now its running quieter—now I can breathe again — swift and oily — running on, running on, down to the sea. See how the grayling sparkle! There's a pike! 'Taint my fault, squire, so help me. Don't swear, now, squire. How steady the river runs down! Lower and slower—lower and slower: now it's quite still—still—still—'

"His voice sank away—he was dead!

"No! Once more the light flashed up in the socket. He sprang upright in the bed, and held out his withered paw with a kind of wild majesty as he shouted—

"'There ain't such a head of hares on any manor in the county. And them's the last words of Harry Verney!'

"He fell back—shuddered—a rattle in his throat—another—and all was over."

Nothing could well be more perfect in its way than the foregoing scene. Admirable, too, is the description of the village revel as illustrative of the condition to which the peasant had been reduced by the deadening and pauperizing policy of the old Poor Law:—

"'In God's name' [said Lancelot] 'if a country is so ill-constituted that it cannot find its own citizens in work, it is bound to find them in food.'

"'May be, sir, may be. . . . But don't you see, sir, how all poor laws, old or new either, suck the independent spirit out of a man; how they make the poor wretch reckless; how they tempt him to spend every extra farthing in amusement?

"'Why is he always tempted to say to himself: 'Whatever happens to me the parish must keep me. If I am sick it must doctor me; if I am worn out it must feed me; if I die it must bury me; if I leave my children paupers the parish must look after them, and they'll be as well off with the parish as they were with me. Now they've only got just enough to keep body and soul together, and the parish can't give them less than that. What's the use of cutting myself off from six-pennyworth of pleasure here, and six-pennyworth there? I'm not saving money for my children, *I'm only saving the farmers' rates? There* it is, sir,' said Tregarva; 'that's the bottom of it, sir—'I'm only saving the farmers' rates!' 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.'

"'I don't see my way out of it,' said Lancelot."

The other Chartist novel "Alton Locke" has been very variously judged. By some critics—and not the least competent—it is regarded as his best bit of work; by others it is declared to be too didactic, too realistic, too emphatic. That it is didactic, no one doubts; but does it atone by its extraordinary earnestness? Crudely realistic, too, but can we not condone its crudity in virtue of its substantial truth; its exaggerated emphasis in view of its unshrinking sympathy?

"With that keen sympathy which he had for suffering humanity: with that appreciation of the wrongs of the poor which had been forced on him for the last ten years, alike by his parochial work and his intimacy with Maurice, he was compelled to speak out; to shriek if you will; to give vent to the cry of anguish and pain and woe, which was well-nigh choking him. If as he cried out he said more and spoke more strongly than perfect taste or judgment would have allowed, it is not to be wondered at; expediency might have suggested a certain reticence; the warm heart and the outraged soul knew neither taste, nor expediency, nor reticence, but spoke what it believed to be the words of bitterness and truth, careless of what might follow."*

Moreover in delineation of character "Alton Locke" was by no means to be despised. If "Yeast" yielded Lancelot, old Verney, and Tregarva, "Alton Locke" gave us Saunders Mackaye—the old Scotchman,—a bit of work which in its way was as good as anything Kingsley ever did: Carlyle, though describing the whole work as crude, was conquered by Mackaye, whose personification he described as a "wonderfully splendid and coherent piece of Scotch bravura." "Saunders Mackaye," he adds, "is nearly perfect: I greatly wonder how you did contrive to manage him." The wonder, as somebody remarks, might have been mitigated had Carlyle looked into the glass!

To the same group as "Yeast" and "Alton Locke," though to a later period of the author's life, belongs "Two Years Ago," published in 1857. The Chartist storm had passed over. Fiscal reform, a reorganized tariff, the repeal of the Corn Laws, had done their work. Sir Robert Peel's noble ambition had been fulfilled; England had become a cheap country for the poor man. And further. Following on the terrible industrial crisis in which Chartism had found its *nidus* there had come a period of commercial expansion and industrial prosperity quite unexampled in the history of this country. In that prosperity all classes had shared. Thanks partly to free imports and cheap food; thanks partly

* *Edinburgh Review*, 1877.

to the rapid development of railways and other means of communication trade had advanced by leaps and bounds in a way which no one had experienced and no one had foreseen. Chartism, begotten of hunger and misery, nourished by trade depression, withered away in the strong light of industrial prosperity. Please let me not be misunderstood. Cheap food and free imports solved *some* of the problems which had given rise to Chartism—*not all.* The Chartists imagined, as we have seen, that the root of the grievance was political, and in part they were right. Mr. Disraeli indeed—one of the earliest of the Chartists—lived to prove that they were right when he passed his famous Act of 1867. But for the moment the crisis was passed. Public attention had been directed to the crying evils of the time—not least powerfully by Kingsley himself—much had been already done; still more was in process of doing. "There is no doubt," writes Kingsley in one of the later prefaces (1855) to "Alton Locke," "that the classes possessing property have been facing since 1848 all social questions with an average of honesty, earnestness, and good feeling, which has no parallel since the days of the Tudors. . . . The love of justice and mercy towards the handicraftsman is spreading rapidly, as it never did before in any nation upon earth; and if any man still represents the holders of property, as a class, as the enemies of those whom they employ, desiring their slavery and their ignorance, I believe that he is a liar and a child of the devil, and that he is at his father's old work, slandering and dividing between man and man. These words may be severe, but they are deliberate; and working men are I hope sufficiently accustomed to hear me call a spade a spade when I am pleading for them to allow me to do the same when I am pleading with them."

Seven years had indeed wrought a change in the spectacle —or perhaps, as one critic rather unkindly suggests, in the spectator.

One thing done, Kingsley turned to another. If people had become less poverty stricken and less miserable, they had not become less superstitious or more cleanly in their persons

or their homes. Disraeli and the young Tory Socialists with whom he was associated had preached two panaceas: wash-houses and allotments. The working men of that day wanted neither the one nor the other. "We want none of your gardens," said one, "and as for washing, I was always *agin* it; it do take the marrow out of a man!" Marrow or no marrow, Kingsley was determined that people should wash themselves and their surroundings, and he was one of the first therefore to enlist in the Sanitary Reform Crusade. To these crusaders we already owe much; we hope, in the near future, to owe more. It was to enforce his hygienic principles that Kingsley, adopting his accustomed medium—prose fiction—wrote "Two Years Ago." In those days dirt was defended by superstition, and some people found an inexplicable connexion between purity of creed and impurity of water, between a wholesome faith and a noisome dwelling, between observance of dogmatic rites and neglect of sanitary laws. I had fondly supposed that though dirt and dogmatism still undoubtedly survive, they survived apart; that the divorce between them was complete. But a short time ago my illusion was dissipated, for I lighted on a village in the extreme West of Ireland where Roman Catholic peasants stoutly resisted the reforming efforts of a Protestant proprietor. The proprietor on coming into the property had inserted windows in the cottages. On his next visit to the West he found the windows removed and the spaces blocked up, for the tenants declared that they would not have those "infernal Protestant windows letting in the cold!" It was in the same village that I heard of a small farmer beating his daughter-in-law for having cleaned the house during his absence at a fair, and having so "swept out the luck." But at any rate in Kingsley's early days dirt and superstition occupied, without dispute, a joint throne, with what result the cholera visitation recorded in "Two Years Ago" only too eloquently proved.

The critical judgments on this novel are—as usual—singularly diverse. There are those who place it highest, while others place it lowest on the list of Kingsley's novels.

For my own part I should do neither. In construction it is perhaps the worst; but, on the other hand, in characterization and descriptive power it seems to me equal if not superior to the best. And after all it is in that gift of descriptive power, of dramatic delineation, of graphic word-painting, that Kingsley surpassed all other novelists of his generation. Recall, for example, the descriptions of that fair west country, the Devonshire lanes around Pen Alva, or that marvellously realistic account — full of movement, full of dramatic force and vividness—the account of Elsley Vavasour's flight over the Glydders. One might multiply instances and illustrations of this same gift; but more to the purpose is it to try and probe the secret of his power; to analyse the means by which the result is attained. And nowhere, I think, is the secret more clearly revealed than in a letter written by Kingsley to some friend who sought his advice in reference to a work of fiction:—

"Set to work as in a picture, putting in your sky and background first, then sketching the general form and colour of your object, then working it up minutely, even to every moss upon the rock (as far as you really would or did see where you stood), and then finish off with some foreground connecting it with you or with some individual definition of what made it in your eyes *that* place and no other. . . . And in this you will find the immense value of varied general knowledge. It gives you a power of illustration, endless analogies, association on association, which is the very charm of this (?) writing; and which, and all the rest, you will find, by the bye, better than anywhere in Christopher North's 'Recreations.' . . . Thus you will fulfil your promise to the reader of showing him really how much there is to be seen by showing him how much *you* saw (and he will take for granted, trust him, that he would have seen it all just as well had he been there). Whereas now you have a little deceived yourself, by forgetting that the names which call up pictures in your memory do not do so in his, and that you must draw them for him. As one instance more, when you talk of meeting the old fisherman—which fisherman? What fisher-

man? Why leave him as a mere ghost! Give the shape of his nose, the presence or absence of a pocket-handkerchief thereto, shape of his small clothes, tears in his coat, colour of the hand which took the baccy, twist of the mouth with which he deposited it in his toothless jaw, etc., etc., and you have a live man, not an abstract thing. Define him as you saw him, as he is—he is not the, that fisherman, but a or any fisherman. 'He looked primitive'; wherein? What made his 'primitiveness'? Expound forthwith."

I know no single passage which so clearly explains Kingsley's power, which so fully admits us to the secret of his own process of composition. But Mr. Leslie Stephen's critical acuteness led him, *à priori*, to a very similar conclusion. In seeking an explanation of Kingsley's singular power he fixes upon his terseness and directness of expression, on the fact that he deals always with first-hand impressions, and that as a consequence the writing is "all alive" and intensely dramatic. "There is," he says, "a human being in the foreground with whom we can sympathize. We do not lose ourselves in mystic meditations, or surrender ourselves to mere sensuous dreaming. We are in active, strenuous enjoyment; beguiling the trout of his favourite chalk streams, sailing under the stormbeaten cliffs of Lundy, or drinking in the rich sea breeze that sweeps over Dartmoor, or galloping with clenched teeth through the firwoods of Eversley."

Of "Two Years Ago" the latter critic has a poor opinion. He speaks of it as a "painful permanence," declares that the sentiment is "poor and fretful," and complains that the hero, Tom Thurnall, "intended to be an embodiment of masculine vigour" had no real stuff in him, and is in reality "a bragging, excitable, and at bottom sentimental person." I confess, ladies and gentlemen, that I cannot quite follow Mr. Stephen in all the hard things he says of Tom Thurnall; but to avoid falling foul of so redoubtable a critic I shall leave Tom Thurnall to you, and myself take refuge in the minor characters of the book. Headley the curate and Valencia, Major Campbell and Mrs. Harvey, seem to me to be quite admirable, and admirable beyond all are Lucia and

Elsley Vavasour. In the whole range of English fiction I know nothing more pathetic or more true than the wifely devotion of Lucia towards the poor, vain, ill-balanced, irritable, but perhaps not entirely unloveable poet Elsley Vavasour, *alias* John Briggs.

I have left myself only too little time to deal with what most people will regard—and I confess I share the opinion—as Kingsley's greatest novels—"Hypatia" and "Westward Ho!" These novels—the first published in 1853, the second in the midst of the Crimean War fever in 1855—belong to and illustrate the third great interest of Kingsley's life—the historical and philosophical.

"Hypatia," from whatever point of view you regard it, is a noble work. It cost him, his wife tells us, "more labour than any of his books"; and we can well believe it. For, apart from its other merits, many and conspicuous, "Hypatia" remains a monument of painstaking research. I should hesitate indeed to pledge myself to the accuracy of the minute details — though Kingsley took extraordinary pains to attain it—or even to the broad truth of the historical portraiture; it may be, as someone has said, that a sound historian would shudder at innumerable anachronisms and pick holes in every paragraph, but all I say is, produce me the "sound historian" who knew that period as Kingsley knew it, produce me the man as deeply read as Kingsley was in the Alexandrine mystics, and then we will argue about details. Meanwhile, in "Hypatia" we undoubtedly possess a wonderfully vivid—and in the main an accurate—picture of one of the most important, pregnant, fateful epochs in the history of the world—a period which witnessed the death agonies of the Great Empire of the past, which saw the struggling to the birth of the new and vigorous nationalities of the future.

The interest of the tale appears to me to centre in the clash and conflict of four great forces:—

(i.) That of Greek philosophy, or rather of Alexandrine neo-Platonism, represented by a singularly pure and beautiful creation, the philosophical lecturer Hypatia.

(ii.) That of Imperial Rome, represented by Orestes, the ambitious and self-seeking Prefect of Alexandria. By this time, you will remember, the Roman power had already received a series of rude shocks at the centre from the impact of the fierce barbarians, and was now obviously decaying at the extremities.

(iii.) That of Christianity, represented in one aspect by the astute and fiery Cyril, Bishop-Patriarch of Alexandria, only half master of his cruel and barbarous monks; represented in another, and to Kingsley an infinitely purer aspect, by Victoria and Augustine.

(iv.) Lastly, that of the Goths, representing in their untamed strength the real political force of the coming era.

The characterization, too, is exceedingly powerful. Leaving on one side Cyril, the truth of whose portrait theologians must determine, we have, first of all, Hypatia herself—singularly beautiful, pure and self-devoted; inflexible, unshrinking in her devotion to the religion of the "Older Gods"; but her service and fidelity alas! alike in vain! For Hypatia was attempting the impossible; attempting to pour new wine into old bottles; to reanimate a cause and give fresh life to principles that were already dead. The Old Gods, it was obvious, had no message for mankind at large; no comfort for the weary sinners like Pelagia; no sympathy with the mighty throbbings of the new world just coming to the birth. And yet we are not bidden, nay it were impossible to withhold our sympathy and admiration from Hypatia, contending with pure self-devotion and untainted zeal for a "lost cause" and an "impossible belief." Then, as now and always, the spectacle is infinitely touching, entirely entitled to respect. With what wonderful effectiveness and power does Kingsley exhibit and bring home to us all this: the hopelessness of the contest; the purity, lofty courage and beauty of the champion of the false; the cowardly brutality of some of the apostles of the "True." You recall, I doubt not, the final scene of Hypatia's martyrdom. I seem to see it now — the blinding glare of the Alexandrian sun, the pavement scorching like hot iron, the confused tumult

of the streets, the throng of black-robed monks, the white-robed prophetess of the dethroned deities. There are the monks dragging her off from her lecture-room—dragging her off to the Cæsareium:

"Yes! On into the Church itself! Into the cool dim shadow, with its fretted pillars, and lowering domes, and candles, and incense, and blazing altar, and great pictures looking from the walls athwart the gorgeous gloom. And right in front, above the altar, the colossal Christ watching unmoved from off the wall, His right hand raised to give a blessing—or a curse?

"On up the nave—fresh shreds of her dress strewing the holy pavement—up the chancel steps themselves—up to the altar—right underneath the great still Christ: and there even those hell-hounds paused. . . . She shook herself free from her tormentors and springing back rose for one moment to her full height naked, snow-white against the dusky mass around—shame and indignation in those wide clear eyes but not a stain of fear. With one hand she clasped her golden locks around her; the other long white arm was stretched upward toward the great still Christ appealing—and who dare say in vain?—from man to God. Her lips were opened to speak: but the words that should have come from them reached God's ear alone; for in an instant Peter struck her down, the dark mass closed over her again. . . . and then wail on wail, long, wild, ear-piercing, rang along the vaulted roofs and thrilled like the trumpet of avenging angels through Philammon's ears. Crushed against a pillar, unable to move in the dense mass he pressed his hands over his ears. . . . He turned to flee. . . . A hand grasped his arm; he looked up; it was the porter. 'And this, young butcher, is the Catholic and Apostolic Church.'

"'No, Endæmon, it is the Church of the devils of Hell!'"

I must leave "Hypatia" with its long gallery of interesting characters—Raphael ben Ezra and old Miriam; Synesius and Augustine; Pelagia and the Goths; and most attractive of all perhaps the young Monk Philammon.

Gladly would I follow with you the fortunes of the youth, bred in the "Laura," passing thence to the busy world of Alexandria, horrified by the barbarous cruelties of the Christian monks, attracted by the "heathen" philosopher Hypatia; recoiling again from a "system" and a "creed" which could give no comfort to his suffering sister Pelagia, and finally finding a resting place in the Desert Monastery—gladly, I say, would I enlarge the theme, but I must pass on, pausing only to commend to you the wise words of Dean Stanley. "Read" he said, "if you would learn some of the most impressive lessons of ecclesiastical history. Read and inwardly digest those pages, perhaps the most powerful he ever wrote, which close that wonderful story discriminating the destinies which awaited each of the characters as they passed one after another 'each to his own place.'"

Nor must "Westward Ho!" detain us, though gladly would I linger over its delightful pages. Where else will you find such a stirring vivid picture of that breezy, boisterous, and bountiful era — the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth? Where else will you catch so clearly the true ring of those Elizabethan sea-dogs — half crusaders, half buccaneers, going forth with the sword in one hand and the bible in the other, to conquer and to Christianize a new world? I do not dwell here on the delineation of character, excellent as it is, on Salvation Yeo and Jack Brimblecombe; on the Leighs and Grenvilles; the Drakes and Raleighs and the other sea-captains of those glorious days. They all stand out from "Westward Ho!" clear and vivid as they stand out in the tales of Hakluyt, or the dusty tomes of Purchase. Nor must I dwell on the descriptive power rarely if ever surpassed even by Kingsley himself, or on the absolute fidelity of the historic portraiture.

Whether in Hypatia we have a faithful picture of the times it is beyond my competence to say: about "Westward Ho!" I am quite certain. For there we have beyond a doubt the very quintessence of the Elizabethan temper. The eager stirrings of the new life born of the Renaissance and the Reformation; the vigorous lusty youth of English

adventure in the New World; the growing sense of national unity and national identity; the profound detestation of the "Inquisition Dogs and the devildoms of Spain." This is the temper that is reflected in Kingsley's "Westward Ho!," in Tennyson's "Revenge," and among the moderns—so far as I know—nowhere else. In "Westward Ho!" moreover we get a few of the too rare glimpses of Kingsley's humour. From his friends we should gather that in social intercourse his humour welled up ceaseless and spontaneous. If that be so, it certainly overflowed too rarely into his books. But in "Westward Ho!" as I say, we get it—as for example in that splendid scene between young Amyas and old Sir Vindex Bridlecombe:—

"But why did Amyas go to the South Seas? Amyas went to the South Seas for two causes, each of which has, before now, sent many a lad to far worse places: first, because of an old schoolmaster; secondly, because of a young beauty. I will take them in order and explain.

"Vindex Brimblecombe, whilom servitor of Exeter College, Oxford (commonly called Sir Vindex, after the fashion of the times), was, in those days, master of the grammar-school of Bideford. He was, at root, a godly and kind-hearted pedant enough; but, like most schoolmasters in the old flogging days, had his heart pretty well hardened by long, baneful licence to inflict pain at will on those weaker than himself; a power healthful enough for the victim (for, doubtless, flogging is the best of all punishments, being not only the shortest, but also a mere bodily and animal, and not, like most of our new-fangled "humane" punishments, a spiritual and fiendish torture), but for the executioner pretty certain to eradicate, from all but the noblest spirits, every trace of chivalry and tenderness for the weak, as well, often, as all self-control and command of temper. Be that as it may, old Sir Vindex had heart enough to feel that it was now his duty to take especial care of the fatherless boy to whom he tried to teach his *qui, quæ, quod:* but the only outcome of that new sense of responsibility was a rapid increase in the number of floggings, which

tone from about two a week to one per diem, not without consequences to the pedagogue himself.

"For all this while, Amyas had never for a moment lost sight of his darling desire for a sea-life; and when he could not wander on the quay and stare at the shipping, or go down to the pebble-ridge at Northam, and there sit, devouring, with hungry eyes, the great expanse of ocean, which seemed to woo him outward into boundless space, he used to console himself, in school-hours, by drawing ships and imaginary charts upon his slate, instead of minding his 'humanities.'

"Now it befell, upon an afternoon, that he was very busy at a map, or bird's-eye view of an island, whereon was a great castle, and at the gate thereof a dragon, terrible to see; while, in the foreground came that which was meant for a gallant ship, with a great flag aloft, but which, by reason of the forest of lances with which it was crowded, looked much more like a porcupine carrying a sign-post; and, at the roots of those lances, many little round o's, whereby were signified the heads of Amyas and his schoolfellows, who were about to slay that dragon, and rescue the beautiful princess who dwelt in that enchanted tower. To behold which marvel of art, all the other boys at the same desk must needs club their heads together, and with the more security, because Sir Vindex, as was his custom after dinner, was lying back in his chair, and slept the sleep of the just.

"But when Amyas, by special instigation of the evil spirit who haunts successful artists, proceeded further to introduce, heedless of perspective, a rock, on which stood the lively portraiture of Sir Vindex—nose, spectacles, gown, and all; and in his hand a brandished rod, while out of his mouth a label shrieked after the runaways, 'You come back!' while a similar label replied from the gallant bark, 'Good-bye, master!' the shoving and tittering rose to such a pitch, that Cerberus awoke, and demanded sternly what the noise was about. To which of course, there was no answer.

"'You, of course, Leigh! Come up, sir, and show me your exercitation.'

"Now of Amyas's exercitation not a word was written; and, moreover he was in the very article of putting the last touches to Mr. Brimblecombe's portrait. Whereon, to the astonishment of all hearers, he made answer—

"'All in good time, sir!' and went on drawing.

"'In good time, sir! Insolent, *veni et vapula!*'

"But Amyas went on drawing.

"'Come hither, sirrah, or I'll flay you alive!'

"'Wait a bit!' answered Amyas.

"The old gentleman jumped up, ferula in hand, and darted across the school, and saw himself upon the fatal slate.

"'*Proh flagitum!* what have we here, villain?' and clutching at his victim, he raised the cane. Whereupon, with a serene and cheerful countenance, up rose the mighty form of Amyas Leigh, a head and shoulders above his tormentor, and that slate descended upon the bald coxcomb of Sir Vindex Brimblecombe, with so shrewd a blow, that slate and pate cracked at the same instant, and the poor pedagogue dropped to the floor, and lay for dead.

"After which Amyas arose, and walked out of the school, and so quietly home; and having taken counsel with himself, went to his mother, and said, 'Please, mother, I've broken schoolmaster's head.'

"'Broken his head, thou wicked boy!' shrieked the poor widow; 'what didst do that for?'

"'I can't tell,' said Amyas penitently; 'I couldn't help it. It looked so smooth, and bald, and round, and—you know?'

"'I know? Oh, wicked boy! thou hast given place to the devil; and now, perhaps, thou hast killed him.'

"'Killed the devil?' asked Amyas, hopefully but doubtfully.

"'No, killed the schoolmaster, sirrah! Is he dead?'

"'I don't think he's dead; his coxcomb sounded too hard for that. But had not I better go and tell Sir Richard?'

"The poor mother could hardly help laughing, in spite of her terror at Amyas's perfect coolness (which was not in the least meant for insolence), and being at her wits' end, sent him, as usual to his godfather.

"Amyas rehearsed his story again, with pretty nearly the same exclamations, to which he gave pretty nearly the same answers; and then—

"'What was he going to do to you, then, sirrah?'

"'Flog me, because I could not write my exercise, and so drew a picture of him instead.'

"'What! art afraid of being flogged?'

"'Not a bit; besides, I'm too much accustomed to it; but I was busy, and he was in such a desperate hurry; and, oh, sir, if you had but seen his bald head, you would have broken it yourself!'"

Here with infinite regret I must leave Charles Kingsley and his work. In a literary sense that work was almost done before he was thirty-seven. The last twenty years of his life produced little or nothing by which in that sense he would care to be remembered. I say *in that sense.* For it is one of the specific peculiarities of him of whom I speak to-night, that long as I believe his literary reputation will endure, the man himself I think will live even longer. Great as was Kingsley as Poet, Novelist and Preacher, **he was even greater as a man. His literary work indeed** reveals in full measure his intensity, his broad and eager sympathies, his varied gifts, practical, poetical, and in the true sense prophetical, and yet all these things perhaps are revealed in even fuller proportions in his life. Of that life you in this place knew more than most of us; for a time all too short he went in and out among you; he identified himself heart and soul with every movement, every interest, every class in the city that he loved so well. But that life belongs—you will forgive and understand me when I say it — belongs not merely to his scenes of labour to Eversley and Westminster and Chester, but to England and the English-speaking world.

For England claims to count Charles Kingsley among her famous sons; to cherish and perpetuate his memory; to enroll him among those who in their several generations and their several ways, have served truly and diligently to the advancement of her glory, to the good of her Church,

to the promotion, by their widely differing gifts, of her common weal. All that Kingsley had of energy and endurance, of genius and of faith, he gave and gave freely with whole hearted devotion and unstinting zeal to the service of God and the service of man. The times on which he lighted were times of difficulty and of social stress; but he faced the difficulty and endured the stress with a courage that never faltered, with a sympathy that never tired. Since the days of his early conflict much has been altered, and much has been improved. Unequal laws have been amended and just laws have been promoted; the strong have been restrained and the weak have been protected; wealth has increased and is day by day "justlier divided"; education has been extended and ancient corporations, like the Universities, have realized more and more fully their national duties and their national responsibilities; above all, social order is being evolved out of the chaos that was characteristic of Chartist days, and the yawning gulph that divided class from class is narrowing, I trust, through mutual sympathy, mutual knowledge, mutual forbearance, mutual love.

And yet with all this, the crisis is not over; the danger is not passed; many of the problems social, industrial, political, called into existence half a century ago are still with us, still confronting us, still impatiently awaiting a solution at our hands. God grant, that as we strive to solve them—as we press onward to the goal—we too may be endowed with something of that manly courage that does not fear to speak unpalatable truths; that we too may have something of Kingsley's sympathetic wisdom; something of his tempered zeal; that we too may know the power of his faith in God, and thus share the secret of his love for man.

"Do the work that's nearest
Though it's dull at whiles;
Helping when we meet them
Lame dogs over styles."

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